July 29

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http://www.monasterodibose.it/chiese/Santa%20Lucia/Lucia/45302854f6f69867e042fc9d8a00e.jpg
Handpainted icon in the Byzantine style, 32x40 cm
The icons of Bose - The Lord's friends

Martha, Maria and Lazarus, friends and hosts of the Lord, witnesses

Today the Western monastic calendar commemorates Martha, Mary and Lazarus, "friends and hosts of the Lord."
"Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus" (John 11:5): the Gospel writers remember not only the men and women who followed Jesus in his preaching ministry, but also these three friends who invited him to their home and were drawn deeply into the mystery of his death and resurrection.
Martha welcomes Jesus and serves him, just as Jesus himself had come into the world to serve and give an example of love "to the end."
Mary of Bethany is depicted in the Gospels as having no other concern than that of welcoming the Lord and keeping his Word. In John's Gospel, it is she who anoints Jesus with perfumed oil and dries his feet with her hair, anticipating with this prophetic gesture the anointing of Jesus' body for burial.
Lazarus is the friend whom Jesus loved and called back to life as he himself was preparing to give his own life. With this last of his signs, Jesus offered a prophecy of the resurrection.
Martha, Mary and Lazarus gave the Son of Man, who had nowhere to lay his head, the solace of friendship and a place to rest. Monks and nuns, who have always tried to recognize and serve Christ in their guests, celebrate these three friends of the Lord as disciples who listened to his Word, lived in communion with him, and recognized the One who knocked on their door as the Messiah who would later welcome them into the Father's house.

PRAYER

Lord our God,
in the house of Bethany
your Son Jesus delighted in
the friendship of Lazarus,
the warm hospitality of Martha,
and the adoring silence of Mary's listening:
grant that we may share our affections with you,
and that we may serve our brothers and sisters with love
by immersing ourselves more and more deeply
in the contemplation of your Word.
Through Christ our Lord.

BIBLICAL READINGS

Gen 18:1-8; Lk 10:38-42

THE CHURCHES REMEMBER...

ANGLICANS:
Martha, Maria and Lazarus, companions of our Lord

WESTERN CATHOLICS:
Martha (Roman and Ambrosian calendars)
Martha, Maria and Lazarus, hosts of the Lord (Monastic calendar)

COPTS AND ETHIOPIANS (22 abib/hamle):
Macarius son of Basilides (3rd-4th cent.), martyr (Coptic Church)

LUTHERANS:
Olaf the Saint (d. 1030), supporter of Christianity in Norway

MARONITES:
Martha, Lazarus' sister

ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS AND GREEK CATHOLICS:
Callinicus of Gangra (3rd-4th cent.), martyr
Theodota of Nicea and her 3 children (d. 304), martyrs

OLD CATHOLICS:
Martha, Maria and Lazarus